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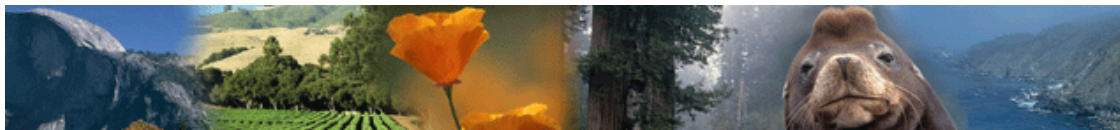
News from California Geographic Alliance

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From: cga@humboldt.edu

To: mbh14@humboldt.edu

Reply To: cga@humboldt.edu



## Geographic Connection

News of the California Geographic Alliance

January 2009

### In This Issue

What's Happening?  
 Director's Message  
 Got Maps?  
 Contests

### What's Happening?



#### Bay Area Region:

New TCs , John Mayhew, Jennifer Martin, Dan Gelfand, and Allison Shoule, are presenting Family Geography at Rooftop on Jan 22 and then taking it to 3 more elementary schools in SF . Regional TCs are presenting in-service "Geography in the Classroom" to 3 classes of San Francisco State University pre-service and masters' candidates in February.

#### San Diego Region:

New TCs Alex Allen and Stacey Rutter presented information and strategies for teaching geography to 120 preservice elementary teachers at San Diego State University and California State University at San Marcos this Fall.

New TCs Jo Schaefer and Jordan McKee engaged 60 preservice secondary teachers in learning strategies at SDSU. Maureen Begley presented strategies for teaching geography-based vocabulary at the California Reading Association conference in Sacramento in October. Bill Lane and Alex Allen will present interactive learning stations

### Director's Message from Dr. Stephen Cunha



Happy New Year!

Our CGA Newsletter has gone digital! Each edition will include new resources and special opportunities, conference dates, professional development, and other things we think you should know. The entries will be concise and relevant. The periodic mailings will reach all CGA teachers and others who promote standards-based geography education.

We will also link new geography lesson plans developed by experts such as you! Please forward your best to share with peers from Crescent City to San Ysidro. Also send us examples of student and teacher achievement, school and district initiatives, and first hand accounts of local flooding, earthquakes, festivals, and the like.

Our goal is to foster a community of like-minded geography educators who prepare students to embrace a diverse world, succeed in a global economy, and steward the planet's resources. To borrow the National Geographic Society's moniker, "We are not alone."



### Got Maps?

We all need great maps, and the Geographic Alliance has them! Order some for yourself and make sure you have a supply for your geographically-inclined colleagues. Don't forget to have a few on hand for site or district meetings and make sure you have plenty to give to teachers attending your workshops. **Mary Hackett**, CGA Office Manager, reports the following maps available for CGA members:

GA! Mapping the Americas Toolkits and posters  
 NGS China Journey of Rock and Water maps  
 CGA world maps - simple and complex, folded or flat  
 CGA world/USA Family Geography maps  
 NGS Wild World maps  
 California Missions poster  
 NGS Iran Born at the Crossroads map  
 NGS Crucible of History The Eastern Mediterranean map  
 NGS Changing Climate poster  
 NGS The Dividing Link Mexico and Central America map  
 NGS poster and activities 2008 Hands-On Australia

**CGA would like to thank Barnes and Noble and MapLink for their generous donation of 16,000 world (pictured above) and USA maps to be distributed to California teachers.**

**If you would like any of these maps, contact [CGA](#) or your regional coordinator (see below).**



### Contests for Teachers and Students

National Geographic is offering a Kids hands-on explorer challenge contest - one for teachers and one for students. Two teachers will be selected through the national teacher contest to explore Peru as part of the 2009 National Geographic Kids Expedition Team. The trip takes place

at the Association of San Diego Educators of the Gifted conference January 24th.

*Thanks to Regional Coordinators Ann Henry and Emily Schell for submitting this news.*

What's happening in your neck of the woods? Contact **Natalie Wojinski** to get your geo-activities in next month's newsletter.

May 23-June 3, 2009. See contest rules at [kids.nationalgeographic.com/contests/Explorer-trip-2009-teachers](http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/contests/Explorer-trip-2009-teachers). CGA has posters available promoting this contest. The entry deadline is February 5, 2009.

While this isn't strictly geography related, imagine the GIS and Google Maps activities you could do if your school won the Grand Prize from the CDWG/Discovery Education "Win a Wireless Lab Sweepstakes!" Click [here](#) for all of the details.



## Geographic Bee Updates

As of this newsletter, Geographic Bees are finishing up around the state. The school level winners are preparing for and taking the qualifying exam for the State Bee. Soon, local Bee Coordinators will be reflecting on their annual foray into the world of intense geographic competition. This update is from **Teacher Consultant Lynn Jones**:

### Arcata School District's Geography Bee Tradition

A student population that has little exposure to the world beyond the redwood curtain typifies north coast Arcata School District. One of the greatest gifts we Arcata teachers can give our isolated scholars is geographic awareness, so we cover the themes of geography--connecting them to history, current events, literature, science, and math--all year long. We celebrate the annual Geography Bee district-wide, honoring the participants for the connections they make, and for their curiosity.

We run both an elementary bee and a middle school version. In elementary school any fourth or fifth grade student may enter. Students are given study packets and study strategies to pursue on their own. Each classroom, K-5, plays geography games in the weeks leading up to the Bee. In some years an after school club supported students with geographic interests and aspirations. The entire elementary school is audience to the winter Bee contest, which is hyped up with balloons and geo-decorations, and is moderated by a Humboldt State University Geography professor.

In middle school all sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students take a Geography Bee qualifying test in their history classes. The top fifteen scorers from each grade level move to a second evaluation, which narrows the contestants down to eighteen-six students from each grade level. Those students compete in front of the whole school on Bee day. A Humboldt State facilitator shows slides and provides geography content to enrich the competitive event.

Both schools award a first and second places, and the first place students test to qualify for the State Geography Bee. Photos are published in the local newspapers and in school newsletters. Winners are pictured in the yearbooks. Past winners have gone on to major in Geography in college, and to demonstrate their enduring interest in geography by contacting school staff during their world travels.

We feel an obligation to expose our students to cultures beyond our isolated northern borders. Geography and the Geography Bee are tools to intensify student enthusiasm and inquisitiveness in all areas of the curriculum.



## My Wonderful World.org

A National Geographic-led campaign

### Using the Website

This month: Taking Action

One of the great things about the My Wonderful World website is that the folks at National Geographic give you several easy ways to take action to bring geographic education to the top of the conversation. To start, visit the homepage and fill out the "[Join the Campaign](#)" form. You'll receive a monthly newsletter from My Wonderful World that will give even more ideas to become a geo-advocate.

Next, visit the "[Notify Your Lawmakers](#)" page. There is an easy form to fill out to let legislators know that you're concerned about the state of geography in our schools.

A third way to take action is to spread the word amongst family and friends by sending them an email message from the "[Spread the Word](#)" page. All three of these ideas take little time, but can help spread the word about the importance of geography in our schools.

## Upcoming Events

3rd-4th Grade Institute  
June 26-July 3, 2009  
University of San Diego  
San Diego, CA  
more information to come

Advanced Leadership Institute  
July 5-10, 2009  
Lake Tahoe  
Lake Tahoe, CA  
more information to come

GeoFest  
February 7, 2009  
Rooftop Elementary  
San Francisco, CA  
GeoFest is a one-day workshop primarily for K-12 teachers in the SF Bay Area.  
Contact [Ann Henry](#) for more information

California Council for the Social Studies - Register now! [www.ccss.org](http://www.ccss.org)  
March 6-8  
Ontario Convention Center  
Ontario, CA  
Come see our booth and don't miss geography sessions led by our Teacher Consultants

## Regional Coordinators Contact Information

When you're looking for assistance, don't hesitate to contact your regional coordinator. She can get you materials, help put on geography workshops or assist you in setting up a family geography night and much more!

Ann Henry, Bay Area and Northern California, [abnh1@comcast.net](mailto:abnh1@comcast.net)  
Rosaleen Zisch, Silicon Valley, [ROZISCH@aol.com](mailto:ROZISCH@aol.com)  
Roni Jones, Sacramento, [ronijones@gmail.com](mailto:ronijones@gmail.com)  
Veray Wickham, San Joaquin, [vwickham@sjcoe.net](mailto:vwickham@sjcoe.net)  
Mary Miller, Greater Los Angeles, [mary\\_miller@earthlink.net](mailto:mary_miller@earthlink.net)  
Diane Hembacher, Dominguez Hills, [dhembacher@csudh.edu](mailto:dhembacher@csudh.edu)  
Emily Schell, San Diego, [eschell@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:eschell@mail.sdsu.edu)

## Contact Info

California Geographic Alliance Office Manager  
Mary Hackett [cga@humboldt.edu](mailto:cga@humboldt.edu)  
Geographic Connection Newsletter Coordinator  
Natalie Wojinski [natalie.wojinski@gmail.com](mailto:natalie.wojinski@gmail.com)

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